

REMARKS

In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are requested. Claims 1-2, 4-19, 24-30, 32-47, and 52-60 are pending, with claims 1, 28, and 29 being independent. Claims 3, 20-23, 31, and 48-51 have been cancelled. Claims 1 and 29 have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of, respectively, claims 21 and 49.

Independent claim 1, as amended, is directed to regulating user interface controls. A user identifier is received. User information is accessed in a database based on the user identifier. The user identifier is automatically associated with a grouping selected from among a plurality of groupings based on the user information. A set of user interface controls corresponding to the identified grouping is automatically provided, with the set of user interface controls including a toolbar. Independent claim 29, as amended, is directed to a computer program that includes instructions for causing a computer to regulate user interface controls in the same way as is recited in claim 1.

Claims 1, 2, 4-19, 24-30, 32-47, and 52-60 stand rejected as being obvious over Carpenter (WO 97/34388) in view of in view of Arcuri (U.S. Patent No. 6,133,915). Claims 2, 4-19, 24-27, 56, and 58 depend from claim 1. Claim 59 depends from claim 28. Claims 30, 32-47, 52-55, 57, and 60 depend from claim 29.

Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and the claims depending from claim 1 because neither Carpenter, Arcuri, nor any combination of the two describes or suggests accessing user information in a database based on a user identifier and automatically associating a grouping with the user identifier by selecting a grouping from among a plurality of groupings based on the user information, as recited in claim 1.

Carpenter is directed to a system for developing user interface themes tailored to a portion of the subscriber base of a computer information service. See Carpenter at page 3, ll. 18-23. As defined by Carpenter, “[a] theme in accordance with the present invention is based on a common user interface model and bundles a set of functionality and information content for a specific demographic group such as adults, kids, or teens.” Carpenter at page 5, ll. 3-5.

In order for the theme to be implemented, Carpenter teaches that “[a] subscriber selects a theme when initiating a session with the [computer information] service.” Carpenter at page 5, ll. 7-8. In the preferred embodiment of Carpenter, “[t]he subscriber may select a theme such as standard 10 or a children’s theme 12 when initiating a session with the online service.” Carpenter at page 6, ll. 8-9 (emphasis added). Figure 1A shows “a Login Screen 10, 12 in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention.” Carpenter at page 6, ll. 7-8. The Login Screen of Figure 1A asks the subscriber “WHO ARE YOU?” and offers the subscriber a choice of “PARENT” or “KID.” Carpenter at Figure 1A. The subscriber then must select the theme from the offered choices. The functionality and content of a theme is embodied in a DLL. Carpenter at page 8, ll. 11-13. In a preferred embodiment, there are two DLLs for each of the types of actions (“Hubs”) that may be performed. Carpenter at page 8, ll. 17-19. The first DLL contains the functionality of the Hub and the second DLL contains the theme elements that control the look and feel of the user interface for the Hub. Carpenter at page 8, ll. 19-23. Following selection of a theme by the user, the DLL for the selected theme is loaded. Carpenter at page 17, ll. 4-5.

As such, Carpenter does not describe or suggest accessing user information in a database based on the user identifier and automatically associating a grouping with the user identifier by selecting a grouping from among a plurality of groupings based on the user information. Instead, Carpenter requires the subscriber to select the theme when initiating a session with the online service, does not access user information in a database based on the user identifier, and does not automatically associate a grouping with the user identifier by selecting a grouping from among a plurality of groupings based on the user information.

Arcuri does not remedy the failure of Carpenter to describe or suggest the subject matter of claim 1. Arcuri is directed to a system and method for customizing controls on a toolbar that allows a user to select which control elements should be displayed on the toolbar. See Arcuri at col. 1, ll. 45-50. Arcuri teaches a toolbar that “can be manipulated by a user . . . [and] can be easily updated by a user.” Arcuri at col. 3, ll. 36 & 54 (emphasis added). “[T]he user can customize the toolbar by adding controls to and removing controls from the toolbar.” Arcuri at col. 7, ll. 35-36. Arcuri teaches a toolbar customized by a user, but does not teach, among other things, accessing user information in a database based on the user identifier and automatically

associating a grouping with the user identifier by selecting a grouping from among a plurality of groupings based on the user information, as recited in claim 1.

As such, Arcuri does not remedy the failure of Carpenter to describe or suggest the subject matter of claim 1. Accordingly, for at least this reason, claim 1 is allowable over Carpenter in view of Arcuri, as are claims 2, 4-19, 24-27, 56, and 58, each of which depends from claim 1.

Similarly to claim 1, claim 29 recites a computer program that includes instructions for causing a computer to receive a user identifier, to access user information in a database based on the user identifier, to automatically associate a grouping with the user identifier by selecting a grouping from among a plurality of groupings based on the user information, and to automatically provide a set of user interface controls corresponding to the identified grouping. The set of user interface controls includes a toolbar. Accordingly, for the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, claim 29 is allowable over Carpenter in view of Arcuri, as are claims 30, 32-47, 52-55, 57 and 60, each of which depends from claim 29.

Independent claim 28 is directed to producing a toolbar having user interface controls. A grouping is associated with a user identifier by selecting a grouping from a plurality of groupings. The groupings correspond to different maturity levels. Later, a user identifier is received over a network connection and a grouping associated with the user identifier is determined. The determined grouping is used to automatically produce a toolbar having user interface controls. The user interface controls included in the toolbar are based on the grouping associated with the user identifier.

As discussed above, Carpenter requires the subscriber to manually select a theme from the offered choices when initiating a session with the online service, where the functionality and content of the theme is embodied in a DLL. Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 28 because neither Carpenter, Arcuri, nor any combination of the two describes or suggests using the determined grouping to automatically produce a toolbar having user interface controls based on the grouping associated with the user identifier, as recited in claim 28. Accordingly, for at least this reason, claim 28 is allowable over Carpenter in view of Arcuri, as is claim 59, which depends from claim 28.

Attached is a marked-up version of the changes being made by the current amendment.

Applicant : Jack WASSOM et al.
Serial No. : 09/224,211
Filed : December 30, 1998
Page : 6

Attorney's Docket No.: 06975-033001
Client Reference: Personalization 02

Applicant submits that all of the claims are in condition for allowance. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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Version with markings to show changes made

In the claims:

Claims 21 and 49 have been cancelled.

Claims 1, 28, and 29 have been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) A method of regulating user interface controls, the method comprising:
receiving a user identifier;
accessing user information in a database based on the user identifier;
automatically associating a grouping with the user identifier by selecting a
grouping from among a plurality of groupings based on the user information; and
automatically providing a set of user interface controls corresponding to the
identified grouping, the set of user interface controls including a toolbar.

28. (Amended) A method of producing a toolbar having user interface controls, the
method comprising:

associating a grouping with a user identifier by selecting a grouping from a
plurality of groupings, the groupings corresponding to different maturity levels;
receiving a user identifier over a network connection;
determining the grouping associated with the user identifier; and
using the determined grouping to automatically produce a toolbar having user
interface controls, the user interface controls included in the toolbar being based on the grouping
associated with the user identifier.

29. (Amended) A computer program, residing on a computer-readable medium,
comprising instructions for causing a computer to:

receive a user identifier;
access user information in a database based on the user identifier;

Applicant : Jack WASSOM et al.
Serial No. : 09/224,211
Filed : December 30, 1998
Page : 8

Attorney's Docket No.: 06975-033001
Client Reference: Personalization 02

automatically associate a grouping with the user identifier by selecting a grouping from among a plurality of groupings based on the user information; and

automatically provide a set of user interface controls corresponding to the identified grouping, the set of user interface controls including a toolbar.